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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 7671
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 2150
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 8197
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5428
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 1411
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
INFO RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC

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SUBJECT: IDENTIFICATION OF GOVERNMENT MEASURES THAT
ENHANCE THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE STEEL INDUSTRY

(U) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST FOR STEEL POLICY OFFICERS. SEE
PARAGRAPH 5.

¶1. (SBU) IN RECOGNITION OF THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE
NORTH AMERICAN STEEL INDUSTRY, THE THREE NAFTA GOVERNMENTS
AGREED IN 2005 TO PURSUE A NORTH AMERICAN STEEL STRATEGY TO
PROMOTE GROWTH, COMPETITIVENESS, AND PROSPERITY. THE STRATEGY
IS A "SIGNATURE ISSUE" UNDER THE NORTH AMERICAN SECURITY
PARTNERSHIP (SPP) THAT WAS DEVELOPED AND IS BEING IMPLEMENTED
THROUGH THE NORTH AMERICAN STEEL TRADE COMMITTEE (NASTC).

¶2. (SBU) THE NASTC, WHICH CONSISTS OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM
THE NAFTA GOVERNMENT AND NORTH AMERICAN STEEL INDUSTRIES,
ESTABLISHED AS ONE OF THE GOALS OF THIS STRATEGY A PLAN TO
STRENGTHEN INNOVATION AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT. THE PLAN IS
INTENDED TO GIVE INCREASED VISIBILITY TO ONGOING PRIVATE AND
PUBLIC PROGRAMS, IDENTIFY NEW INITIATIVES, AND IDENTIFY OR
DEVELOP LINKAGES BETWEEN THESE INITIATIVES AND EFFORTS TO
ADVANCE A PRO-MANUFACTURING AGENDA. THE FOCUS WILL BE ON
SUSTAINABILITY, TECHNOLOGY, AND ATTRACTING ENGINEERS TO THE
STEEL INDUSTRY.

¶3. (SBU) AS A FIRST STEP, A WORKING GROUP OF THE NASTC
PREPARED AN INVENTORY OF EXISTING INITIATIVES, PRIMARILY AT
THE NATIONAL LEVEL, IN NAFTA COUNTRIES IN THE FOLLOWING
AREAS: R&D, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING.

¶4. (SBU) AS A NEXT STEP, THE NASTC WORKING GROUP IS REFINING
ITS INVENTORY AND GATHERING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT
SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS IN THESE AREAS ON BOTH A NAFTA-WIDE BASIS
AND IN OTHER COUNTRIES. THE PURPOSE OF THESE EXERCISES IS TO
LEARN MORE ABOUT INITIATIVES THAT ARE WORKING WELL AND TO
EXPLORE GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES. THE NAFTA STEEL INDUSTRIES
PLAN TO CONDUCT THEIR OWN RESEARCH AND ARE WORKING THROUGH
THEIR OWN INDUSTRY CONTACTS, INCLUDING THE INTERNATIONAL IRON
AND STEEL INSTITUTE, TO COMPILE INFORMATION ON THIS TOPIC.

¶5. (SBU) TO ASSIST IN THIS EFFORT, WE ARE REQUESTING POST (EU
COMMISSION, EU MEMBER STATES GERMANY, FRANCE, AND ITALY, AND
JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA) TO IDENTIFY INITIATIVES OFFERED BY
GOVERNMENTS IN THESE COUNTRIES THAT ARE DESIGNED TO ENHANCE
THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THEIR STEEL INDUSTRIES, FOCUSING ON
R&D, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING. THESE PROGRAMS SHOULD INCLUDE
GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AS WELL AS PUBLIC/PRIVATE SECTOR
COOPERATION. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE
USEFULNESS/SUCCESS OF THESE INITIATIVES WOULD ALSO BE MUCH
APPRECIATED. OUR INTENT IS TO COMPLETE THIS INVENTORY IN
EARLY FEBRUARY, SO WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR RESPONSE BY
JANUARY 31.

¶6. (U) FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT
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RICE